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Kirk: Enact the Centrist Medical Rights Act (H.R. 2516): "Congress shall make no law interfering with the decisions of you and your doctor"

Pelosi bill: Cuts Medicare and Raises Taxes in the Teeth of the Great Recession

WASHINGTON – U.S. Rep. Mark Kirk (R-Ill.), co-chair of the centrist Republican Tuesday Group and co-author of the centrist Medical Rights and Reform Act, issued the following statement on Speaker Pelosi's 1,990-page health care bill:

"Over the last 10 months, dozens of doctor, patient and hospital groups joined with members of the centrist 'Tuesday Group' to craft reforms that would lower costs, expand coverage, protect Medicare, reject tax increases and defend our doctor-patient relationship. Based on our findings, next week I will offer a centrist alternative for reform that would:

1. Enact the Medical Rights Act;
2. Eliminate waste, fraud and abuse;
3. Reform lawsuits and expand electronic medical records; and
4. Give tax relief to individuals who buy health insurance and grant the right to Americans to buy coverage from any state in the union.

"Unfortunately, Congressional leaders rejected these common sense, centrist ideas.

"Today, Speaker Pelosi unveiled the latest version of her trillion-dollar government takeover of our health care. Her proposal cuts Medicare, increases taxes and adds to our deficit over its first real 10 years of operation: 2013-2023.

"Under the Pelosi bill, the government will create the ultimate health care monopoly that will drive out other plans now covering 170 million Americans. It violates the medical principle: First, Do No Harm. Over time, a huge government program like this leads to waste, fraud and corruption – now involving each family's doctor. Like government programs in other countries, the federal government will soon run out of money. In response, waiting times go up, procedures disappear, and quality declines.

"The President and Congressional leaders claim that a government-run health care would not interfere with decisions you make with your doctor. If that is true, they should enact the Medical Rights Act and legally protect your relationship with your doctor."

The Medical Rights Act

Earlier this year, Congressman Kirk introduced the Medical Rights Act, H.R. 2516, which prohibits any government interference in the doctor-patient relationship. The federal government should not decide the type of care we get - that should be left up to you and your doctor. The Medical Rights Act would uphold this principle, legally protecting the doctor-patient

relationship.

A Future without the Medical Rights Act

While more than 90% of Americans facing breast cancer are treated in less than three weeks, only 70% of Canadians get such quick treatment. The average Briton waits even longer - 62 days.

In America, 93% of diabetes patients are treated within six months while in Canada, less than half – 43% – see a doctor in the same time. In Britain, it is worse – only 15% of British diabetics are seen within six months.

More than 90% of American seniors are treated for hip replacement within six months. In Canada, less than half receive treatment in the same time frame with many waiting over a year. In Great Britain, only 15% of patients are treated within six months.

The Medical Rights Act will protect the quality of American medicine – making delayed or denied care by the federal government illegal.

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